

71
CLAIMS

1. A network information system comprising:

- an information page server for serving information pages across a network to requesting parties having endpoint systems connected to the network; and
- a service system with a session manager for establishing a respective communication session for each of at least some of the information pages and for joining to such session the endpoint systems of parties currently located on the corresponding page, each communication session that is established having an associated transport mechanism for allowing the exchange of data, via data transfer channels, between the endpoint systems joined to the session;

the service system having a sessions overview subsystem arranged to receive a notification from the session manager upon an endpoint system joining or leaving a session, the sessions overview subsystem comprising:

- a real-time database for recording, on the basis of the notifications and for each session that is established, the identity of the associated information page and information about any party whose endpoint system is currently joined to the session, and
- a user interface for providing a view of the current page sessions and the related party information to a permitted user.

2. An information system according to claim 1, wherein the user interface provides said view of the current page sessions to an endpoint system of the permitted user along with session identity information on at least a user-selected one of the page sessions whereby to enable the permitted user to send a request to the session manager to join the user's endpoint system into the selected session.

3. An information system according to claim 1, wherein the user interface includes functionality for enabling the permitted user to select a page session to join and which, in response to the user selecting a session to join, is operative to initiate joining of an endpoint system of the user to the session by sending to the session manager, a joining request that directly or indirectly identifies the user and the session to be joined.

4. An information system according to claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises functionality for dynamically generating from the real-time database, a web page listing against the information pages that have associated sessions, the corresponding party-related information, and a web server for serving the page to the permitted user on request.
5. An information system according to claim 1, wherein each of at least some of the joining notifications includes an identifier of the party associated with the joined endpoint system, the sessions overview subsystem including a database access mechanism for looking up attribute data of the party in a database using the party identifier, this attribute data being included in the party-related information stored in the real-time database.
6. An information system according to claim 1, wherein each of at least some of the joining notifications includes party attribute data, this attribute data being included in the party-related information stored in the real-time database.
7. In combination, the network information system according to any one of claims 1 to 6, and a contact center having service representatives with endpoint systems capable of being joined to sessions established by the service system, at least one service representative being a said permitted user.
8. An information system according to claim 1, wherein the service system in setting up a communication session, creates a service-session functional entity for controlling the joining of endpoint systems to the session, this joining involving the sending of connection details of the transport mechanism associated with the communication session to the endpoint system concerned or its proxy.
9. An information system according to claim 8, wherein the service-session functional entity comprises a session instance with generic behaviour for adding and removing endpoint systems to the communication session and for recording the endpoint systems currently joined to the communication session, and an associated service instance with

service-specific behaviour determining when the session instance is to add and remove endpoint systems.

10. An information system according to claim 8, wherein the transport mechanism
5 associated with a communication session provides multiple data transfer channels, for different media types, between endpoint systems joined to the communication session.
11. An information system according to claim 8, wherein the state of connection of an endpoint system to the transport mechanism is signalled to the session-service functional
10 entity by leg messages passed from the endpoint system to a leg controller of the service-session functional entity.